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I have been to see Mr. <sup>Nickels</sup> ~~Nickels~~, Chief of the Romanian desk, at the Department of State, in order to clarify certain assertions regarding the attitude of the Department, contained in the invitations which were addressed by General N. Radescu to certain exiled persons, in view of the formation of a National Liberation Committee.

Before asking Mr. Nickels the questions I desired to have clarified, I wished to make certain that I had understood correctly the position of the Department of State with regard to the formation of a Rumanian committee, as that position had been defined to me by my interlocutor himself in the course of previous talks. I asked Mr. Nickels whether the conclusions I had drawn as to the position of the Department of State, from our previous talks, were correct. I resumed those conclusions as follows:

1) The Department of State has not suggested and does not intend to suggest, at least up to the present time, the formation of a committee to anyone. The Department however let it be understood that, should such a committee be formed by Romanians, on broad and representative bases, the American authorities would be prepared to give it a certain amount of support.

2) The Department of State categorically denies any assertion that it would involve itself in any way in the formation of the committee. It denies that it has ever suggested the inclusion of any person in the committee, or that it has ever expressed any preference other than that laid forth in # 3 below.

3) The Department of State encourages the Romanian movement abroad to achieve the greatest measure of unity in its action.

Mr. Nickels stated that these three points resume with absolute correctness the attitude of the Department of State.

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I then exposed to Mr. Nickels the matters I wished to have clarified. In the first place, the announced intention of Gen. Radescu to proceed on August 10, 1948, to proclaim the formation of the committee "with persons having answered affirmatively", seemingly unconcerned with the question whether or not such persons answering affirmatively had the necessary qualifications to afford the committee a representative character. In the second place, the following sentences, of which the first comes from the circular issued to the persons invited to take part in the committee, and the other two from a letter addressed to *Mr. Gretzianu* in connection with this same matter:

1) "... following a new personal communication made to me by the Department of State, a communication which none among us may ignore, in view of the advantages ensuing therefrom on behalf of the cause we are called to defend, I have decided, in my capacity as the President of the last Romanian constitutional <sup>and lawful</sup> government, to assume responsibility for the formation of the national committee of liberation, and to go forward with all the haste demanded by circumstances."

2) "In view also of the attitude taken by the Department of State, it would be my belief that I may assert that a refusal on your part to enter the national committee, in the conditions in which I made a proposal, would not be the course that would best serve your own interests."

3) This decision I took in full accord with those in whom we have placed all our hope of escaping the communist yoke, and assuming full responsibility for the act I am accomplishing."

I pointed out to Mr. Nickels that the above allow the following conclusions to be drawn:

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1) General Radescu asserts that the Department of State asked - or that he/least suggested - ~~himself~~/take the initiative of forming a committee. I observed that this assertion seems irreconcilable with the attitude of the Department of State, which had been confirmed to me barely a few minutes before, and according to which the formation of a committee had not been suggested to anyone.

2) More than this, by asserting that a "personal communication" had been made to him, General Radescu allows it to be understood that the Department of State considers him to have the right to form the committee, or at least that the Department had expressed a preference in his favor. This would be in contradiction with the categorical assertion of the Department of State, to the effect that it does not desire to be involved in any way in the formation of the committee.

3) More serious still, General Radescu accompanies his announced intention to form the committee in any case by the Tenth of August, "with those who answer affirmatively", with such assertions as "this decision I took in full accord" with the Americans, and as "in view of the attitude taken by the Department of State", those who should fail to accept would have cause to regret their decision. This, I pointed out, is a mode of making people believe that the Department of State advised him not to bother too much about who accepts or fails to accept the invitation, but to proceed in any case with the formation of the committee. I stressed that this impression which General Radescu is trying to accredit is incompatible with the appeal for unity made by the American Government, for it suggests that a committee set up by General Radescu would somehow have the approval of the Department of State, no matter who might adhere or fail to adhere to it.

As a matter of fact, I pointed out to Mr. Nickels, it is unlikely

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that of the fifteen persons addressed by General Radescu, more than five would answer his appeal, not one of whom would be a member of a political party. (The reasons for this shall be set forth below.)

I asked Mr. Nickels, therefore, whether he considers these assertions of General Radescu's, directly involving the attitude of the Department of State, to be exact.

Mr. Nickels stated that the Department of State had not sent any personal message to General Radescu, but had merely answered a query put by the latter. General Radescu had indeed informed the Department of his intention "to take the initiative for setting up a committee", and asked to know what would be the attitude of the Department of State toward this intention. It was replied to General Radescu that the Department would view with pleasure the formation of a Romanian committee, set up on broad and comprehensive bases.

I then asked whether the correct interpretation of this reply would not be that what would be viewed with pleasure is the formation of the committee as such, and not necessarily its formation by General Radescu. In other words, I hinted that what the Department meant was neither to consider that General Radescu was the proper person to set up the committee, nor yet to indicate a preference in his behalf. What would have happened, I asked, if the political parties, too, had announced their intention to take the initiative of forming the committee - as they consider themselves perfectly well called upon to do, <sup>seeing that</sup> ~~as~~ they deem themselves to represent the majority of Romanian public opinion - and had then asked the Department of State what its attitude was toward this initiative? Would they have received the same reply as that given to General Radescu?

This, I stressed, was more than a simple hypothesis, because the

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political parties had indeed taken such an initiative, even before Gen. Radescu, but had not brought it to the notice of the Department of State so far - and would not bring it up at all, had the issue not been raised by others - because they consider this to be a matter of internal Romanian concern, that need not be discussed with any foreign government.

Mr. Nickels replied that the interpretation I gave to the Department of State's answer to General Radescu was correct, and that to a similar query that might have been put by myself on behalf of the political parties, the answer would have been the same. That is, as Mr. Nickels stressed, that the Department would view with pleasure the formation of a committee "on broad and comprehensive bases".

Mr. Nickels averred that this is all that actually happened and all that had been said to General Radescu, in reply to his query - that and nothing more.

Consequently, to a new query of mine, he replied that General Radescu had not been encouraged, nor had it been suggested to him, to form the committee with such persons as might answer affirmatively to his appeal, no matter who those persons might be.

With the moderation that characterizes him, Mr. Nickels added the comment: "General Radescu has certainly interpreted the reply given to his query by the Department of State, in a way that goes beyond the Department's intentions, and which favors his own (Radescu's) point of view. I asked whether the publication of General Radescu's appeal in any of the Romanian publications that appear abroad might comport some unpleasant consequences. Mr. Nickels wound up by saying that such publication would provide "our common foes" with propaganda arguments, representing the United States as interfering in the domestic affairs of other countries.

31 July 1948.

-s. G. N. Buzesti. 2